

- (c) Import of wheat of 55 lakh tonnes was done in 2006-07 which has improved the stock position of wheat in the central pool; and so the wheat stocks will be more than the buffer norms of 40 lakh tonnes at the start of the next procurement season.
- (d) A Committee of Officers/Experts was formed to examine various strategic options and recommend an appropriate procurement strategy for RMS 2007-08 and their recommendations have been acted upon appropriately by the Government.
- (e) Wheat exports have been banned upto 31.12.2007.
- (f) 4 lakh tonnes of wheat has been released under OMCS to cool the market prices.
- (g) The Government is keeping very close watch on domestic and international prices of wheat.
- (h) During the Meeting held on 12.2.2007 with the Food Secretaries of wheat procuring States and officers of the Food Corporation of India (FCI), it has been confirmed that all advance arrangements for wheat procurement have been made for RMS 2007-08 both by State agencies as well as by FCI.

Procurements at MSP

†460. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantities of wheat, gram, barley and other foodgrains under rabi crops which have been purchased at Minimum Support Price during 2006-07;

(b) the quantity purchased and stored thereof at Minimum Support Price during 2005-06; and

(c) the reasons for shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The quantities of the rabi foodgrains — wheat, gram, barley and masoor procured by Government agencies in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2005-06 and 2006-07 at Minimum Support Price (MSP) are as follows:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(in lakh tonnes)

| Foodgrains | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|------------|---------|---------|
| Wheat | 147.9 | 92.3 |
| Gram | 1.1 | Nil |
| Barley | Nil | Nil |
| Masoor | 0.05 | Nil |

(c) The low level of procurement of wheat in RMS 2006-07 was on account of high ruling market prices, lower than the targeted production of wheat, negative market sentiments, low market arrivals and more active participation by private traders.

Since the prices of gram and masoor were ruling higher than MSP announced by the Government of India, no procurement of these foodgrains could be made in RMS 2006-07.

Prices of commodities

†461. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that traditional traders of the country are facing heavy financial losses due to entry of foreign companies in the retail market recently and due to sale of pulses, vegetables, fruits by them on reduced prices in malls of Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action being taken to bring parity in prices of the said commodities; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Government do not maintain data in this regard. As per extant policy, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not permitted in retail trade, except in 'single' brand retail trade.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.